

## **Living the Mission Episode 7: The Next Best Step with the CSSA Student Leadership Team**

**Delaney** [00:00:05] Welcome to Living the Mission with the Center for Service and Social Action. I'm Delaney Burns.

**Caroline** [00:00:09] And I'm Caroline Maltese. Pull up your Adirondack chair.

**Delaney** [00:00:12] Or grab your favorite stuff from The Tween.

**Caroline** [00:00:14] And come chat with us and some friends about experiences that have shaped our values to promote social change.

**Both** [00:00:19] And Live the mission.

**Caroline** [00:00:21] Hey Delaney.

**Delaney** [00:00:24] Hi Caroline.

**Caroline** [00:00:25] How's it going?

**Delaney** [00:00:27] Going pretty well. How are things for you.

**Caroline** [00:00:29] Things are good for me. These couple of weeks before Thanksgiving are going to be a marathon, not a sprint, but a marathon. But yeah. Otherwise doing well, sort of just like an anxious time of life for me currently, like applying to schools, and just waiting, decisions. And that's all kind of a lot. But trying to like, just be patient through that. That's what I'm working with so far.

**Delaney** [00:00:54] Yeah. I think a lot of people are struggling for motivation this whole semester in particular. You know, it's always hard. We're kind of like week after week, one week it's all right., and the next week it's challenging. But I agree these next couple of weeks are going to be a little bit trickier. Maybe, but overall, yeah, patience, I think is a good word that we...

**Caroline** [00:01:14] Should we ... should have a word of the week.

**Delaney** [00:01:15] I like it.

**Both** [00:01:16] Patience!

**Caroline** [00:01:18] OK, so today what are we, what are you working with?

**Delaney** [00:01:21] Controversy with civility.

**Caroline** [00:01:23] So officially this is our last C. So we've sort of gone through all the categories, gone through the individual, gone through some group, gone through some societal ones. But we're going to circle back to the group category. So controversy with civility. According to the social change model of leadership, it recognizes two fundamental realities of any creative group effort, the differences in the viewpoints and the fact that these differences must be aired openly

and with civility. So it's in the group category because it focuses on our ability to work with those around us to create change very civilly.

**Delaney** [00:01:58] And we were struggling a little about who we would bring on to talk about this. And then we wanted to do something with the student leadership team, which is essentially a group of nine leaders in the Center for Service and Social Action. This team works to facilitate trainings with CSSA to take care of the liaisons who drive to and from service and ultimately just be a point of passage from, you know, the community and students to the Center for Service and Social Action. So we wanted to bring this team on because they're a group that works together. Caroline and I have really enjoyed being a part of this group and this team. We are the only two returning from last year. Everyone else graduated. But I would say in my experience, this team has been so cohesive, so positive, so uplifting, like we've just been having the best time working with them. And I think that one point that we want to hit on is that we all have different viewpoints and outlooks, and I really see that. But it's never been a barrier. It's always been something that we're able to push into. And we respect each other enough to build off of each other and grow with each other and just like laugh together and make it work so.

**Caroline** [00:03:11] And work through the controversy in a way that is super productive. Yeah, not that there's not any, but just working through it in a more civil way, one would say. So yeah, we're, we don't have the full team, but we do have a few of the members who are available. So let's hop right into it and go see what's going on with them.

**Delaney** [00:03:31] Yeah, they've got some good things to say. Let's see.

**Caroline** [00:03:40] All right. Hey, everybody, how's it going?

**Delaney** [00:03:43] Hi, SLT friends.

**Ray** [00:03:45] Hello!

**Drew** [00:03:46] How's it going?

**Caroline** [00:03:46] Hey. So if we could just have you all introduce yourselves, tell the people who you are. If you have any fun facts you want to share, feel free to do so. Anything about your life, go for it. Let's start with Ray.

**Ray** [00:03:58] All right. Awesome. Hi, everyone. My name is Ray Flannery. I'm a junior at JCU, double majoring in Spanish and Hispanic studies and Sociology Criminology with a minor in Population and Public Health. And I have done numerous service placements with the CSSA, but currently I'm serving in the Rainbow Connects program with University Hospitals. So super exciting. Yeah.

**Caroline** [00:04:20] Thanks, Ray. Thanks for being here.

**Ray** [00:04:22] Thanks for having me.

**Caroline** [00:04:23] Let's go to Jordan.

**Jordan** [00:04:25] Hey, guys, I'm Jordan. I'm also a junior at John Carroll and I'm also double majoring, but I'm double majoring in Psychology and Exercise Science. My fun fact is that Monday morning I popped my tire at seven a.m. on a branch that was in the middle of the street. So that was a good way to start my week. I hope your week started better!

**Delaney** [00:04:47] Wow. Thank you. All right. Let's have it taken over by Drew.

**Drew** [00:04:53] Hey everybody, I'm Drew. I'm a senior at John Carroll. I major in Accounting and minor in Entrepreneurship. This is my first year on the SLT for CSSA and I also am the project coordinator for Jesuit Day of Service, so that's what I like to do in CSSA. Right now, my placement is at Lutheran Metropolitan Ministry, doing weekly poetry with the men's homeless shelter there. And my fun fact is that I love donuts.

**Delaney** [00:05:21] That's a great fact!

**Caroline** [00:05:23] Send us home, Erin.

**Erin** [00:05:24] All right. Hi, everyone. I'm Erin. I am a sophomore at John Carroll. It is also my first year on the SLT. I'm currently serving at Building Hope in the City and I have previously served at the Detention Center. And my fun fact is that I'm currently on quarantine and I have cleaned immensely every inch of the place that I'm staying in because that's all there is to do.

**Delaney** [00:06:01] Very nice!

**Caroline** [00:06:01] A productive quarantine.

**Delaney** [00:06:05] So one of the more important questions that we ask on the podcast and we'll get right to the hard hitting stuff. What is your favorite snack from the The Inn-Tween?

**Caroline** [00:06:15] And we're lucky because you all know what the Inn-Between is. Sometimes our guests haven't been there, but you all are seasoned veterans and proud patrons of the The Inn-Between. So we would love to hear what your favorite snack is.

**Drew** [00:06:27] I guess I'll go. I mean, if you don't answer that, the tender basket is your favorite snack at The Tween. I mean. Not to say that you're wrong, but you're wrong, then you've got to get the barbecue sauce with it.

**Ray** [00:06:39] Drew, I have friends on both sides of that issue, too, because some people will only get the tender basket and some people are like, I'm never going to try that. It's too mainstream. And I'm like, it's good every once in a while, but you got to branch out a little bit. So I love the signature sandwiches, but primarily the mallore on flatbread.

**Erin** [00:06:57] I think you're both wrong because clearly the best snack is the black bean and corn quesadilla from the Inn-Between. It is the best thing, arguably the best food on campus, but that is the best thing from The Tween.

**Caroline** [00:07:13] Erin I have to agree. I might have to step back from the tender basket, the black bean quesadilla is really good.

**Jordan** [00:07:19] I'm going to have to throw you guys for a little twist here. And my favorite snack from the Inn-Between is the pickles in a bag. They're not made there, but they're really good and I can't find them anywhere else. They come in this little black bag and you like rip the thing and there's pickles all sliced in there.

**Delaney** [00:07:38] Well let's keep moving things along here.

**Caroline** [00:07:40] All right, so what we're talking about this week is controversy with civility and the SLT might be a little bit more familiar with these seven Cs because we're the ones planning the trainings. And I know we have a couple SLT members who planned the last, last month's training with controversy with civility. So would you be able to tell us anybody what that means to you or how you see that like important in your life, that value?

**Ray** [00:08:08] OK, I can share a little bit about this. I was actually part of the team that planned that last monthly training for controversy with civility. And basically, it entails a lot of really, not only communicating effectively, but also listening to someone else's points. And we really wanted to try and encourage that in our last training session. And we actually had like sort of a mock debate session, which was pretty cool. But that holds a special place in my heart because I have been part of the speech and debate team both in high school and college. And so I just think, you know, there's always validity to someone, hearing someone else out and hearing their opinions expressed and sort of letting them talk to you through their thought process a little bit. And so I think that something with controversy with civility, is that it's it's more complicated than it may appear on the surface. There's there's always something spurring someone's opinion. It's you know, you can always dig a little deeper and get into their personal beliefs and why they hold them that way.

**Caroline** [00:09:07] Mm hmm. I like what you said, Ray. It's deeper than like what a lot of people think. I think when you hear controversy with civility, you you tend to think, oh, you know, you have to have the open communication, you have to have the productive dialog. But that's hard. And like, that's not something that is easy, at least for me. Like, you know, you always that's always the goal. But getting to that point is more complex than I think a lot of people would maybe tend to think.

**Delaney** [00:09:35] And one of the things that we were also curious about in terms of this trade and this element of the 7 Cs is if you all tend to kind of like lean into controversy, is it something that you're OK with and something that you see yourself being strong in? I know we've kind of talked about like if we're able to handle it and if it's something that is an attribute of ours that we're willing to kind of like press into or if it's something that you kind of like stray away from. So where you guys kind of at on that spectrum of dealing with controversy?

**Erin** [00:10:07] I know at least at the beginning on our SLT like the first day we kind of talked about this. And I think that I definitely tend to stray away and kind of avoid anything because I don't want to cause any any waves, I don't want to do anything like that. But I found that learning how to navigate it doesn't like it doesn't necessarily have to be a negative thing. And so I think that that's what I'm trying to figure out. And like learn right now is how to do, how to have controversy in a way that it is productive and where I can have a conversation with somebody and not avoid it because it would make me uncomfortable.

**Caroline** [00:10:54] Has anybody had a situation where they've had to, like, been in a leadership role or been a part of a team where they've had some sort of controversy? And do you have any, like, tips on how you dealt with it or how you moved forward through that?

**Drew** [00:11:11] Yeah, on my role through Carroll Ballers on campus. Quickly, Carroll Ballers is just a program where we go to play basketball at a juvenile center around campus and kind of build relationships with the youth there. But some controversy I ran into was that at first like there was kind of like a barrier between us and the youth there, because just we came from such different backgrounds and there was kind of controversy while we were playing basketball. And we were like discussing, like the themes we were trying to discuss that week, like character. But like just like bringing people together and like having a conversation about it I think was the best way to do it, just like I think passive-aggressiveness is like not the way to solve things and controversy. So, like, if you can, like, be civil about it and really just like talk things out like that really helped us and that even just built our relationships even more.

**Delaney** [00:12:01] Mhmm. Well, and I think going along with that one misconception that I even tend to have about it, and I think that like other people would maybe say the same is when we deal with controversy and thinking about it, like in terms of civility, like it has to be like hot button issues or like hot topic issues or like things that are like super apparent in the world that like people are debating or kind of like disagree upon. But it's even like with little things and like seeing even like working in student organizations and things like that here sometimes like just, you know, I'm all about like the peace keeping and everything, but just like pressing into it a little bit and being like intentional and honest about it, it's oftentimes more productive. And just like taking a little step forward with it and trying to deal with it, then will like amount and even more peace. And obviously, like, that's that's normally the goal that we're working for.

**Caroline** [00:12:51] And they always say that's where you grow the most is when you have the discomfort and. Right. And that's it's great to hear. It's like great to hear that. But that's hard. And so. Yeah, but I think that and even it doesn't have to be I think controversy is like a loaded word, too. It's sort of like a it feels just like a very aggressive word. But controversy, like you said, doesn't have to be like that. Just these small issues working through those. I think that every day when we have little controversies or little disagreements or little issues that we need to solve working through those, that's a great way to, like practice for one of these maybe these bigger topics are being discussed or you have bigger controversies or there's more weight on them.

**Delaney** [00:13:32] Yeah. Is there anything that you all have heard in terms of like classes or conversations that you've had or service placements, anything that's like stood out to you, like good wisdom or advice in terms of dealing with controversy, how to be like a socially responsible leader? And like, where did this, like root from, someone inspiring or someone that like you look to for advice or what types of things have you heard about it?

**Jordan** [00:13:58] So I can kind of share on this topic. So this summer, I interned at Boys Hope Girls Hope, which is a youth-oriented nonprofit. And with this summer having all of the racial protests and things like that, there was a lot of conflict that was happening at Boys Hope Girls Hope, seeing as like a lot of the population that we serve, probably about seventy-five to eighty-five percent of them are predominantly African-American. So there was a lot of different things that were happening. There were a couple of days where we had to like we were locked down on campus because of like riots that were happening and stuff like that. And I was really struggling with figuring out how to deal with it and cope with it and understand what was going on in order to

best help the people we were serving. And the one thing my one supervisor said to me was that you can't solve everything. You can't make peace with everyone. You have to accept the controversy, figure out how to make a small change, and then start with that and see where it takes you. Like you can't tackle a big thing all at once. You have to go step by step. And so that really helped me to compartmentalize, like what was, OK, this is the first thing we have to deal with. OK, then move on to the bigger thing.

**Caroline** [00:15:09] I think that that's important too. And how that relates back to some of the work that we're doing in CSSA, like we're not going and doing weekly service, or at least this is how I think about it. Like, I shouldn't think that I'm going to solve all of the injustices that the people that I'm serving may have, may be experiencing. Like, you can't go in with that mindset. You can't think, I'm going to go to weekly service, this issue is going to be solved after that, that not only can you think about controversy that way, you can also think about working towards promoting justice, working towards the common good, working towards being a man and a woman for and with others. I think that that is like a really good first step to to tackle the small issues and take it day by day and then and then work towards that that larger good.

**Delaney** [00:15:55] One time my grandpa said to me, he said, I was talking about, you know, all this stuff that I'm doing with service. And I just got in, like, very upset about it and everything, and he's like, you can't change the world in a day. And I think that's true, you know, I always will hear, you know, you have to take the best next step like in all of this that we're doing. Whether it's dealing with like tensions or difficulties and things like that, we have to take the next best step and we have to figure out a way to kind of like to solve it and what we can do and what's around us. But, and he didn't say you couldn't change the world. Just you can't change it in a day! It takes some time to make a difference and to make change happen.

**Caroline** [00:16:30] So then sort of wrapping up here, this is our last C that we're tackling on this season of Living the Mission. And so how do you think that practicing the value of controversy with civility or practicing all of the characteristics that are required to be civil when you experience controversy, how do you think that can help us live out the John Carroll mission, help us after we graduate, go out into the world and still have these values and hold them close and practice them on a daily basis?

**Ray** [00:17:03] Well, I'll just say that I think that a large component of the John Carroll mission is that inspiration that gets instilled in the students to really make a change and have a power to do something in the world and find what they want to do and do it. And I think that going along with kind of what Delaney was touching on with this sort of making a difference and you can't change the world in a day, is this idea that really meaningful change comes from a series of small changes in the first place. And so when you sort of shrink it down to that level and you say, I can accomplish this and this, and that builds, feeds into this ultimate goal of, in terms of civility, there's no such thing as an easy civil discourse. But I think overall, it's kind of like one of those things that the more you work at it and you chip away bit by bit, it's like, OK, I'm getting more, I'm getting better equipped to do this in any situation, in any context for the rest of my life. So for me, that's that's been a huge influence on me for sure. Through John Carroll.

**Drew** [00:18:01] Yeah, I think Caroline you touched on postgraduation like Living the Mission at John Carroll, like I don't see it as like just being a four-year commitment. Like being a senior, like I kind of want to see how I can become this kind of leader after I graduate because there's going to be controversy in my workplace probably daily. And being able to deal with that in a civil way, deal

with your coworkers, like even just like maybe dealing with clients like I just think like being a leader, like John Carroll tries to build leaders for us outside graduation so that when we're in our workplace or like wherever we are after graduation, that we can continue that through.

**Jordan** [00:18:37] Kind of piggybacking off of Drew, like what you said Caroline about after college, I think the one thing when I think about controversy with civility and Living the Mission is respect. Just having respect for yourself and respect for each other and respect for other people's opinions. And I think with controversy and civility, yes, it's great to share your mind and your thoughts, but you just have to maintain that mutual respect for each other. And I think that that's definitely something that I've learned a lot through doing service and interacting with a bunch of different groups of people is that you just have to keep in mind that level of respect and kindness. And I think that's something that I'll carry with me for a while for sure.

**Erin** [00:19:20] And similar to what Jordan said and it has already been touched on a little bit, it's just that men and women for and with others. And I think to truly be with someone, you know, you have to have that civility with controversy, like Drew was saying, you know, wherever you're going to be in life, you're going to end up disagreeing and being with people. But to be with someone truly just doing that in a way with respect and civility.

**Caroline** [00:19:46] And I like that we're acknowledging that this is going, we're going to have controversy and that we're not saying ways to avoid controversy or, you know, how to shy away from something. Like in a lot of cases, I feel like going out into the world, like you got to tackle it head on and it's going to be there and you're going to have to deal with it. So I think that it's like living the John Carroll mission is sort of acknowledging that we're going to have to experience controversy and then, you know, practicing and preparing ourselves so that and being proactive about it so that we're not, you know, totally shocked when it happens in the real world.

**Delaney** [00:20:21] Right. And I think kind of going along with that as well, it's like acknowledging that we are prepared for this to happen. Like you said, you're not running away from it. You know that that it's going to happen. And we also know now that we want to handle it and not just turn away from it, but that's a part of it. Like going back to what Ray was saying, you know, we want to make a difference. We know that, like, controversy's going to be a part of it and we're going to have to deal with that. But like even like what Erin was touching upon as well, like we have to accept every part of people and people come with controversy and we come with differences. And I think it's like one of the cornerstones, like when we go over it in the workshops, like you accept the person's struggles and you accept their joys. And you have to accept the whole picture and controversy comes with that. And it leads to good things as well.

**Caroline** [00:21:07] It's like entering into a relationship. Like that just made me think of like when people get married, like you accept people in sickness and in health and good and in bad. Right?

**Delaney** [00:21:15] Yeah!

**Caroline** [00:21:15] Like you to to be with other people, to be in community, you have to accept all of them. You can't just accept the good. You have to take them for who they are and accept the bad and work through. And of course you like everyone has those good and bad things. You've got to accept it. You've got to work through it.

**Delaney** [00:21:33] The only way out is through.

**Caroline** [00:21:34] That is true Ma'am! All right. Well thanks guys so much for joining us today. It was a pleasure to have you on. You make us proud members of the SLT. We're happy to have all of you in our lives in this little family that we call The Student Leadership team.

**Drew** [00:21:52] Thanks for having us.

**Jordan** [00:21:53] Thanks, guys!

**Caroline** [00:21:54] Thank you. We'll see you soon!

**Delaney** [00:21:56] Talk to you soon!

**Ray** [00:21:58] Bye!

**Delaney** [00:22:00] Thank you for gathering with us here on Living the Mission.

**Caroline** [00:22:03] We hope that you continue to journey with us as we learn how to be socially responsible members of our community.

**Delaney** [00:22:09] In the meantime, connect with CSSA on all your favorite platforms:

**Caroline** [00:22:12] Instagram,

**Delaney** [00:22:13] Twitter,

**Caroline** [00:22:13] Facebook.

**Both** [00:22:13] See you next time.